

**Opening address at the ITU workshop
Tehran, Iran, 25 July 2005**

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Director, TSB/ITU**

**Your Excellency,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good morning.

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to be here with you this morning for the opening of this ITU workshop. I am grateful for the presence of His Excellency Dr Seyed-Ahmad Motamedi, Minister of Information and Communication Technology. I sincerely wish to thank the Government of Iran and the Telecommunication Company of Iran for inviting this workshop to the beautiful city of Tehran. I am very pleased that I have a second opportunity to visit Iran, having been here in 1979 when on a stopover at the airport of Tehran during my first ever international trip.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) was founded in 1865. After the United Nations was established, the ITU became a UN specialized agency for Telecommunications. The purpose of the Union is outlined in the ITU Constitution. Essentially, ITU provides a forum in which membership can cooperate for the improvement and rational use of all kinds of telecommunications. There are three major Sectors in ITU, including the Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R), the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), and the Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D). As Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau of ITU, please allow me to make a short introduction to our telecom standardization work. With the rapid growth of the Internet and mobile telecommunication, globalization, the worldwide trend for liberalization, and the convergence of technology and services, standardization plays a more and more important role in making telecommunications accessible to all, thus fostering development and growth in all domains. Indeed the importance of international standards has been highlighted by the World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS) in its “Declaration of Principles” and its “Action Plan”.

The main functions of ITU-T are to study technical, operational and tariff questions and to adopt Recommendations on them with a view to standardizing telecommunications on a worldwide basis. Among many areas of study, IP-related issues, mobile technologies and tariff and accounting issues are topics of high priority. Other areas of study include optical fiber transmission technologies, local access technologies, multimedia, telecommunications management network (TMN), signaling, numbering and addressing, global

interconnectivity and interoperability, security, etc. The latest topic of priority is NGN (next generation networks).

The ITU-T has a wide membership including 189 Member States, 354 Sector Members, and 95 Associates by the end of June 2005. The ITU-T's standardization work is a unique collaboration between governments, operators and manufacturers.

ITU-T's standardization environment has changed a lot in the last decade. Today, ITU-T can approve its technical Recommendations in less than two months with its famous tool, Alternative Approval Procedure (AAP), which was officially launched at the end of January 2001. Very soon we will mark the 1000th draft new or revised Recommendation approved by AAP. The success of the NGN Focus Group, which will issue its first set of specifications - Release 1 - by the end of 2005, is another good demonstration of ITU's quick reaction to market needs. ITU-T continues to improve its working methods to increase its efficiency in order to attract industry members. ITU-T has spared no effort in looking for effective cooperation between ITU and other Standard Developing Organizations.

As one of its strategies, over the last few years, ITU-T has worked very hard to bridge the standardization gap between developing and developed countries. To this end, ITU-T has organized Study Group meetings and workshops in different regions of the world, strengthened its presence in the regions and prepared briefings and training courses aimed at developing countries. We are pleased with the increasing participation of experts from developing countries. In 2001, around 24% of the total number of delegates who attended the ITU-T meetings in Geneva were from developing countries. By 2002 that figure had risen to 32%.

There is positive awareness that amidst the rapid changes in the technological environment, it is vital that developing countries should actively participate in international standardization activities. With the introduction of market competition, the operators in developing countries need information on new technologies as well as new measures to run businesses, etc. However, the concerns and interests of developing countries will only be addressed if its members bring them to ITU. Developing countries have potential markets and highly educated experts. Active participation in ITU-T meetings will help developing countries in getting more experience, and more importantly, more confidence to deal with the rest of the world. It is often said that developing countries need ITU. It is true. It is equally true that the ITU needs developing countries. One of the ITU's strengths is the participation of developing countries. The developed world needs the knowledge of your markets and business requirements, your concerns and interests so that global standards are developed to cover all parts of the world. Therefore, the participation of

developing countries in ITU activities is beneficial to both developing countries and ITU.

Iran has always been active in ITU activities. At PP-02, Iran was elected as a member of the ITU's 46-Member Council, which was no doubt a recognition of Iran's contribution to ITU. I have noted that from time to time, Iran sends a delegation to various ITU-T activities. I am very pleased with the initiative of the Authority of Iran to invite us to hold this ITU workshop, which clearly demonstrates its increasing interest and strong desire to participate in international standardization activities. I would like to express my sincere congratulations to you!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This workshop will provide a good opportunity for Iranian engineers to understand the ITU-T's situation, particularly in the areas of optical transmission and local access technologies, telecommunication management networks, NGN and security. This workshop also provides a good opportunity for ITU staff, particularly TSB staff, to understand the situation as well as the difficulties encountered by the Iranian telecommunication community. I hope this workshop will prove to be useful to both sides.

I should not conclude my short remarks without expressing my appreciation to the speakers and the TSB staff who have worked very hard to organize this workshop. Finally, I would like to thank our host again.

I hope you will all enjoy this workshop.

Thank you for your attention.